

Amendment under 37 CFR 1.111  
Serial No. 09/900,490  
Attorney Docket No. 010866

**REMARKS**

Claims 1 - 18 are pending in the present application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 5 and 12 have each been amended. No new matter has been added. It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated March 1, 2005.

**Allowable Subject Matter:**

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication in item 2 of the Action that claims 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 16 have been allowed.

**As to the Merits:**

As to the merits of this case, the Examiner sets forth the following rejection:

claims 1-7, 12, 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Poisner (U.S. Patent No. 6,842,776) in view of Bjornson (U. S. Patent No. 6,728,660).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1, as amended, now calls for a maintenance management information storage means that stores information about conditions of maintenance on the basis of both usage conditions and operating environment conditions for each model of the machine; an input means for entering data of the machine's model, the usage conditions, and the operating environment conditions into the storage means; a display means; and a control means, wherein on the condition that the machine's model, the usage conditions and the operating environment conditions of the machine have been entered in the storage means through the input means, the control means reads out conditions for maintenance that correspond to the machine's model, the usage conditions, and the operating environment conditions, respectively, from the storage means to predict information about a recommendation for maintenance management at a predetermined operation time of the machine with reference to the conditions of maintenance. Similar amendments have been made in independent claims 5 and 12.

For example, as discussed in the bridging paragraph between pages 23 and 24 of the present specification, the operation environment condition DB has a set of model-specific tables, each of which lists various maintenance management items and corresponds to the operation of a machine under a specific environmental condition (operation environment condition). For the model A, for example, there are different tables 24A, 24B, and 24C that correspond to different environmental conditions (e.g., the installation locations in sandy, highland, and sloping areas) as shown in Fig. 4. Each of the tables 24A, 24B, 24C describes predetermined maintenance

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management items (main body, lubricating oil, under body, engine, etc.) and the time of when check and maintenance should be carried out (e.g., check and repair at intervals, or at the times of H1, H2) in accordance with these items.

However, it is respectfully submitted that Poisner fails to disclose anything concerning using operating environment conditions to predict a maintenance recommendation for a machine.

Instead, Poisner is only concerned with a common environment. More specifically, according to Poisner:

System 200 is applicable to common environment 202. In this embodiment, common environment 202 is a house. In other embodiments, environment 202 can be, for example, a factory, a large commercial building, or any other environment in which devices are grouped. Environment 202, in this embodiment, includes devices 206, 208, 210, and 212. Devices 206, 208, 210, and 212, in this embodiment, are home appliances and entertainment equipment such as a dishwasher, washing machine, refrigerator, stereo, television, etc.”<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly, it is submitted that Poisner fails to disclose or fairly suggest the features of independent claims 1, 5 and 12 as amended. In addition, it is respectfully submitted that Bjornson fails to disclose or fairly suggest the above-noted drawbacks and deficiencies of Poisner with regard to the features of amended independent claims 1, 5 and 12.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see, lines 65, col. 2 – line 7, col. 3 of Poisner.

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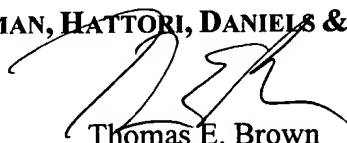
In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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